

ON THE STANDING OF GENUS TIBICEN LATR.

BY E. P. VAN DUZEE

In a recent paper¹ Dr. Horvath maintains that all the generic names used by Latreille in his *Familles naturelles du Règne Animal* (1825) are vernacular French names and are therefore unavailable for use in scientific nomenclature. Unfortunately I am absolutely unable to accept this view. In 1914, when preparing the paper² in which I corrected the generic assignments then used by many European hemipterists for certain of their cicadas, I went over this phase of the matter very carefully and concluded that we had no alternative but to accept as valid Latin names, all names in Latreille's 1825 work that are given in correct Latin form. In reaching this conclusion I consulted with several students who were thoroughly competent to pass on such a question of nomenclature. Dr. Horvath now decides that in this work Latreille uses the Latin word Tibicen in a *French sense*, and on the strength of this establishes a new genus *Lyrastes* for *Cicada plebeja* of Scopoli and thus changes the generic name of nearly all of the large and well-known cicadas of the eastern United States.

I certainly have no objection to making any *necessary* correction in the nomenclature of our insects, and think it should be done at the earliest possible date as a means of stabilizing nomenclature, but I can see no occasion for making repeated changes on a fine point of interpretation that has no connection with the International Rules, and to which a large portion of our students certainly will never agree. It is the constant recurrence of such arbitrary changes that is driving our entomologists toward *nomina conservenda* which eventually would break down our entire system of nomenclature. I maintain that no change should be made unless absolutely necessary to make our nomenclature conform to the International Rules. As stated, the case of Tibicen has nothing to do with these Rules. The logical thing to do is to admit that an author may use both Latin and vernacular names in the same book, and to retain Tibicen for the cicadas related to *plebeja*.

¹ Les Noms Génériques de nos Trois Grandes Cigales Indigènes. Ann. Mus. Natl. Hung., XXIII, p. 93, 1926.

² Can. Ent., XXVIII, p. 387.